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1962/10/24

NG TELEGRAM Department of State 1000m ACTION: BOT 24 11:597 35 1 ) DECEMBELLY TO PART ( CP POL BO OF PA CLAMPHODS Unless you perceive objection, you about per early ofcer Labras to 17 BTF explain to Foreign Minister or other Portograbes Totale bey this DADR ARA Government has viewed Soviet policy with respect to Cuban crisis. EU. NEA Beginning in middle of summer, there were a number of indications 10 DAC that Kirushcher and Soviet Covernment had concluded there was no LP possibility Soviet Union could obtain its objectives with respect to INE Berlin through negotiation. There were also indications that Khrushchev felt too personally committed to achievement of his objectives in Berlin to retreat, as well as indications that factors which were pushing moviet Government to a resolution of this problem, were increasing (situation in East Germany, Communist Chinese pressure, etc.) and that Sowiet Union had decided showdown on Berlin problem was inevitable within some months. There were also indications that Soviet Government and Khrushchev personally had developed doubts as to whether they could win in a showdown and that alternatives might be either an ignominious . retreat or muclear war.

" out .S - The Secretary S/AL - impassador Thompson:sr EUR- Mr. Tyler Mr. Rogers Date: 4/3/97 IS FRC COR DEPARTMENT OF STATE REPRODUCTION FROM THIS X RELEASE ... (X) DECEMBER MR Cases Only: COPY IS PROHIBITED ( ) DECLASSIFY IN PART. TS authority toc DELETE Non-Responsive Into ( , ) S or ( ) C OADR ( ) CLASSIFY as AL DOWNGRADE TS to ( ) S or ( ) C CADR

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Soviet Government privately and later publicly stated that while it would insist upon conclusive discussion of Berlin problem in relatively short period, it would not do so until after American Congressional elections. It maintained this position even though it was made clear to them that so far as US Government concerned, elections had no bearing on the problem.

A number of assurances were given by Soviet Government both privately mer, and publicly that it would not arm Cuba with offensive weapons. This was not / dialetical discussion but specific assurances against weapons that could reach the US. Tass statement of September 11 said that Soviet Union had no need to take such action. This statement, which was largely concerned with Cuban situation, related it to question of German peace treaty and other international problems.

When Gromyko saw President October 18, he made standard but strong statement about Berlin and German peace treaty issues and then made following statements about Cuba: Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba" that "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive" and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would have never become involved in rendering such assistance."

Khrushchev indicated to Ambessador Kohler that he had virtually decided to come to UN meeting in New York latter part of November and

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Gromyko in his conversation with President confirmed this, although no specific date was set.

When Soviet action in arming Cuba with offensive nuclear missiles became evident, it was because of developments set forth above that this Government tended believe Soviet action was probably primarily geared to showdown on Berlin, intended to be timed with Khrushchev's arrival in US and completion of installation of these missiles in Cuba.

Addressees may discreetly use general line foregoing and particularly substance Gromyko's statement to President on Berlin on October 18, in background talks with foreign correspondents.

FYL Purpose of this message is to improve understanding that any
Berlin crisis will be due to Soviet action. In point of fact, Cuban crisis may
well have effect of improving overall position of West in Berlin through clearcut evidence of our resolution.

End

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